

REMARKS

No claims have been amended, added or canceled. Accordingly, claims 1-23 are currently pending in the application.

35 U.S.C. §102 and §103

Claims 1-3 and 11-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by Osawa et al. Claims 8-10, 16, 19-21 and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Osawa et al. These rejections are traversed as follows.

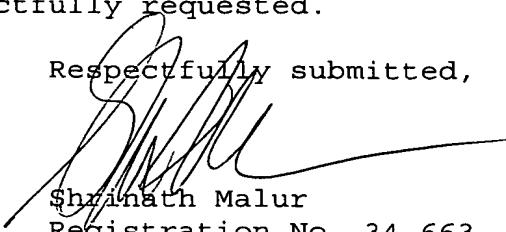
Without admitting to the propriety of the rejection of the claims in view of Osawa et al, Applicants hereby submit a verified translation of the foreign priority document in order to antedate Osawa et al. The present application is based upon a priority application filed September 7, 2001 which is earlier than the date that Osawa et al can be relied upon as prior art. Therefore, it is submitted that the rejection has been rendered moot.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants contend that the above-identified application is

now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and reexamination are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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